

Newsletter of The Coach House Museum
In association with Feilding & Districts Community Archive
November 2026

Boys and their Toys—What a fantastic day!!

The sun shone and the visitors came, I would guess around 4—500 of them. Happy smiles and friendly chats filled the carpark and foyer. An impressive display of scale models, radio control planes and boats, bokarts, War medals, war games, cars, motorbikes, trucks, tractors, jetboats and aircraft gave everyone something to see and talk about. A few treasures were bought from the team in the big shed. The BBQ was hot, the candy floss spun in bright colours and plenty of people enjoyed a cuppa. Well done everyone, the day was a super success.













Mrs M McCorkindale's Story continued from September *This story is solely Margaret's memories and her recollections of stories told to her. Events mentioned may not be exactly accurate.* **Part 2** *After arrival in Wellington, they were evidently met by an official of the Company that was opening up the back country of New Zealand and that official advised the arrivals to go north because at the time, Wellington had all the labour it needed and there was not much work offering. So, father and several of his fellow passengers, husbands and wives, came up from Wellington to Foxton on a small coastal boat. Foxton was then a thriving little port; coastal boats used to come and go practically every week. However, arriving at Foxton they were advised to go on to Palmerston North which was a new town opening up in what they called the Manawatu District. They went from Foxton to Manawatu on a wooden railway track, open trucks really, no carriages of course and I think it was powered by a traction engine or something of its kind. However, in Palmerston they were met officially by the mayor because Palmerston North had achieved a Mayor and Council by that time. The mayor was also the Chief Storekeeper of the city and he met these new arrivals and said to them – 'You had better go on to Feilding'. Feilding was a new town which had just begun in 1874; it was formed under a private company in England headed by the Duke of Manchester and his cousin the Earl of Denbigh.*



The Foxton railway line was opened as a wooden tramway to Palmerston North, operating 1871–1873. It converted to iron 1875–1876. The line was closed 19 July 1959. New Zealand Railways. "Foxton Railway Station", September 1949

My father arrived there in 1878 to find that Feilding was becoming well established and to keep their links fresh and green in their memories with Britain they decided to name the first seven streets of Feilding after royalty. They established King Street, Queen Street, Prince Street, Duke Street and then varied to one or two others such as Ferguson Street after a famous general, Derby Street after the city of Derby in England and there was another street I can't just recall, Manchester Street, Denbigh Street were established. There were many tributes paid to the Duke of Manchester; there was Manchester Street and Manchester Square, that was a square of land set aside as the centre of the town. A mile further north there was another area of land called Denbigh Square. Both of those names were commemorated in Manchester Street School, Manchester Hotel, Manchester Bridge, Denbigh Street Bridge and so on. Anyhow those were the earliest streets formed in Feilding.

My father, because he was educated, found it not hard to get work and he was in constant touch with the Secretary of the Company who lived in Feilding at the time, Mr A.F. Halcombe. He was the local secretary of that company and he found a job for my father as Assistant to one of the first Surveyors and Mr Halcombe and his wife, he had married a New Zealand woman, and he built the first imposing house shall I say in Feilding, a double storey wooden house on five acres of land at the corner of the main street and another street. My father, after having got a job and thought the prospects of Feilding looked well, decided to send home for his Irish sweetheart, Margaret Casey, and she arrived out in New Zealand in 1879, came to Feilding. There were no churches in Feilding, no ministers, and she and my father had to travel to Wanganui to be married which they did. They married in 1880.

SVENDSEN BUILDING



The newly published book 'First Fifty Years of Feilding Business 1874-1924' by Marilyn Wightman was launched at the museum in September. This tells the stories of people like the Svendsens and other Feilding town folk who established business and trades. Back in the 1870s Svend Svendsen came to New Zealand from Sweden. He eventually settled in Feilding and established his bootmaker business. Trained in Sweden as an apprentice under his uncle, Svend was soon earning a living from his business in Feilding. The initial building on the corner of Manchester and Bowen Streets was wooden. Svend and his family, as was common practice in those days, lived out the back of the shop. The building caught fire in 1905 so it was rebuilt in more fire proof brick and mortar. A larger, substantiable two storey structure included additional shop spaces in the design. Svend was now a landlord as well as a business man.

One outcome to the new book sees shops in Feilding being visited and offered a small poster which outlines what was taking place years ago on that same space. Calling on Courtesy Ford, the vehicle dealers now on that corner of Manchester and Bowen Streets they were delighted to get their shop poster. For them it solved a perplexing puzzle. Just two weeks before, it was noticed that the asphalt on their car display area was developing a slump. Concerned that there was a drainage or water leak the plumber was called in to investigate. The area was dug down, eventually needing a digger in to do the work. What was found was just a midden, thankfully no plumbing disasters. Everyone was confused about the pile of leather pieces, strapping, buckles, shoe soles, bottles and broken crockery uncovered. Why had this been buried on the site? The answer was in discovering that back in the 1890s the site was a bootmaker's shop.

Keep a lookout when next in town for the posters. Many shops have put them on show in the front window of their business.

Marilyn Wightman

Mark your calendars now, don't book that luxury holiday as you will just be disappointed.
It is on again in April: Old Skills in Action Day. Let us know if you have an idea or know someone or something that may fit into the theme of this day. Lets make it bigger and better than ever before!!

Join us in Feilding for a fun day out!

OLD SKILLS IN ACTION

$10 Adult, $5 Child
$25 Family (2a+3c)

The Coach House
Pioneering to Prosperity

Demonstrations
Entertainment
Activities & Games
Devonshire Teas

Step back in time with action packed fun for the whole family



Sunday
18 April 2027
10am - 4pm

127 South Street FEILDING
06 323 6401
www.coachhousemuseum.nz

COACH HOUSE MUSEUM - FEILDING

On this Day—11 November 1978 Andy Haden dives to save rugby test



847,000 Welshmen anticipating the first Welsh victory over the All Blacks for 25 years – and a few hundred banner-waving Kiwis – crowded into Cardiff Arms Park on Armistice Day 1978.

The home crowd had reason for optimism. New Zealand had been thrashed 30–16 by Australia at Eden Park two months earlier, and outmuscled 12–nil by Munster the previous week before struggling to beat Ireland 10–6.

All Blacks winger Stu Wilson scored an opportunist try, but four penalties saw Wales lead 12–7 at half-time thanks. A second Brian McKechnie penalty closed the score to 12–10, but as full-time neared the crowd sang 'Land of My Fathers' with increasing conviction.

With two minutes to play, a lineout formed 35 m from the Welsh line. As Welsh hooker Bobby Windsor threw the ball in a second time, All Blacks lock Andy Haden flung himself sideways as if in a C-grade action movie. His locking partner Frank Oliver also fell to the turf, more apologetically and with some assistance from Welsh lock Geoff Wheel. English referee Roger Quittenton awarded a penalty to the All Blacks 15 m infield, on the grounds that a Welsh player had been holding down another New Zealander. McKechnie kicked the goal and the All Blacks held on to win amidst vehement booing. They went on to become the first All Black touring team to achieve the 'Grand Slam' by defeating all four home unions. **nzhistory.govt.nz**